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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

I.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAST FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THE recent death of the Hon. E. B. Washburne imparts a melancholy interest to the two stately volumes just issued of his *Recollections*.* The period covered is that of his Ministry to France—1869–1877—from before the fall of the empire to the establishment of the present Republic. The book is written in an interesting, unaffected style, being almost a daily record of events. Mr. Washburne gives us pen and ink sketches of Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugenie, from whom he received many pleasant civilities. He was in Paris when war was declared against Germany, and he narrates the political events which led to the short but decisive contest between the two great powers. Then came the flight of Eugenie and the death of Napoleon, and soon afterwards the siege of Paris. During these exciting events Mr. Washburne was at his post doing his duty, often, of course, with the most trying and perilous surroundings. The successive changes of the French Ministry and the excitable character of the population of Paris made his position a very delicate and difficult one. Not only had he to look after the interests of his own countrymen, but he took upon himself, at the request of the German Government, the guardianship of the rights and property of the German population in Paris. His tact and judgment under all these circumstances were most noteworthy. The Germans, from the Emperor to the poorest subject, have since regarded him with love and veneration, and Mr. Washburne was always proud to show to his friends the magnificent portraits of the Emperor and of Prince Bismarck, which those eminent personages presented to him as a personal acknowledgment of his diplomatic courtesy and efficiency. The most trying period of all was during the brief reign of the Commune, when the French Ministers retreated to Versailles, and the diplomatic corps went with them—all except Mr. Washburne, who felt that the interests of his own countrymen and of the Germans, who looked to him for protection and advice, made it necessary for him to remain at his post, and to enter into diplomatic relations of a certain kind with the leading spirits of that anarchical period. He gives us in these memoirs some very interesting personal details respecting these men, who for a brief period held France at bay, and made riotous and terrible use of their short lived but despotic power. He often interposed to save valuable and innocent lives, sometimes successfully, oftener, alas! in vain. The name of America sufficed to keep personally respectful even the fiercest of the miserable wretches who for a time ruled supreme, and to insure him practical protection. The events leading to the recapture of Paris by the regular troops and the re-installment of the French Republican government are graphically told. On the whole, the book is a noble contribution to historical literature, and has the merit,

* “*Recollections of a Minister to France, 1869–1877.*” By E. B. Washburne, LL.D. With illustrations. Charles Scribner’s Sons.

not always belonging to such literature, of being in the highest degree readable. The eminent author looked forward, we believe, with great interest to the publication of these volumes, and it is deeply to be regretted that he has not been spared to witness their cordial reception by his countrymen. The books are handsomely bound and copiously illustrated.

II.

ECCLESIASTICAL ECONOMY AND CHURCH LIFE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the wonderful vitality and the triumphant progress of the Christian church, its best friends do not yet claim that its organization is perfect. Viewed as a corporate body, consisting often of several hundred members, each claiming a voice in her deliberations, it is not a matter of surprise that knotty problems sometimes arise.

The ethics of church relations in all possible circumstances has never received fuller or more able treatment than in the handsome volume,* edited and in part written by the Rev. Washington Gladden. The inception of the work is due to Mrs. Margaret Woods Lawrence, known as "Meta Lander," but her collected material was purchased by the publishers, and by Mr. Gladden combined with his own work and that of other men well versed in matters of social and ecclesiastical polity. Prominent among these may be named the Rev. Drs. Lyman Abbott, Josiah Strong, J. H. Vincent, T. T. Munger, H. M. Scudder, J. K. Nutting, A. F. Schauffer, with Mr. Austin Abbott, Mr. E. C. Gardner, and Profs. Llewellyn and Waldo Pratt.

The series of brief, crisp, suggestive essays, seventy-seven in number, is conveniently arranged under the general divisions of the Pastor's Call, Parish Business, Parish Building, The Pastor at Home and at Work, Helping the Pastor, The People at Work, The Sunday-School and Worship. No more than brief mention of the most thoughtful is here possible.

Under The Pastor's Call, Mr. Gladden criticises the sentiment which would prevent a weary and overworked pastor from seeking to change his field so long as his services are acceptable. "If they [the churches] could create a sentiment which would prevent a settled minister from receiving a call, the ministers would be left in an embarrassing position. The attempt to create such a sentiment is an attempt to form a kind of ecclesiastical trades-union, under which ministers shall be wholly at the mercy of the churches." The practice of "stealing a pastor," as it is called, could be avoided by the establishment of ministerial bureaux, conducted with so much dignity and delicacy that no clergyman need hesitate to enter his name as an applicant. The still more difficult matter of getting rid of an undesirable pastor is happily treated by Mrs. Lawrence.

So many churches suffer partial or entire shipwreck on account of financial embarrassment that the practical opinions of an eminent lawyer as to the best means of conducting parish business are well inserted in a work of this character. Mr. Austin Abbott offers several short chapters of wise suggestions, in which he carefully explains the principles underlying church organization, spiritual and secular, and gives rules for the successful administration of church affairs, for contracts, funds, and special trusts and financial accounts. And Mr. E. C. Gardner, whose numerous and popular works on building entitle his opinions to consideration, agreeably discusses the church edifice, favoring the use of the most durable material and the choicest architectural designs, and insists that the interior shall

* "Parish Problems: Hints and Helps for the People of the Churches." Edited by Washington Gladden.—The Century Company.